

ensure children who need to enter foster care will be placed in the least restrictive setting appropriate to their needs, by targeting federal dollars only on smaller family-foster homes and on other care settings for children and youth with special treatment needs or those in special circumstances, such as pregnant and parenting teens or older youth in independent living settings. A number of states already have undertaken special efforts to reduce the number of children in congregate care and to preserve group care settings for children with special treatment needs.

Children and society pay a high cost when the current systems fail to adequately address the needs of the children who come to the attention of our child welfare systems, nearly 80 percent of whom are victims of neglect. We believe that the specific changes proposed will go far in encouraging state and local child welfare systems, private providers, the courts and youth and families who have been involved in the system to work together to achieve significant change for children over the next decade.

We look forward to working with you to ensure these new child welfare finance reforms will truly benefit children who come to the attention of the child welfare system and to continue to explore additional improvements on their behalf to ensure they all have safe, permanent families. Thank you for your continuing leadership on behalf of these children.

Sincerely,

SHARON OSBORNE,
Board Chair, Children's Home
Society of America.

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF WISCONSIN,
Milwaukee, WI.

Hon. VERN BUCHANAN,
Chairman, *Human Resources Subcommittee*,
House Committee on Ways & Means, Wash-
ington DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BUCHANAN: Children's Hospital of Wisconsin strongly supports the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2016 (H.R. 5456). We applaud your leadership on this important issue.

Children's Hospital of Wisconsin (Children's) is the region's only independent health care system dedicated solely to the health and well-being of children. We serve children from every county in the state and are recognized as one of the leading pediatric health care centers in the United States. In addition, Children's is the largest not-for-profit, community-based child and family serving agency in Wisconsin. Through our Community Services work, we provide a continuum of care to more than 15,000 children and families annually. This includes family preservation and support, child and family counseling, child welfare, child advocacy and protection, and foster care and adoption services.

We strongly support the Family First Prevention Services Act that that would allow funds under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act to be used for the first time for evidence-based prevention services to help keep children at risk of placement in foster care safely at home with their parents or with kin. The legislation represents a significant and meaningful shift in child welfare policy by prioritizing up-front, evidence-based services to keep families together. We know from experience and empirical research that this is important for the healthy development of children.

The bill also makes significant advancements to integrate interventions and measures focused on child well-being into the child welfare system. Children's believes that prioritizing and providing accountability for child well-being, in addition to

safety and permanency, is critical to achieving better outcomes for children and society and positioning children to thrive into adulthood.

Children's is committed to improving the health and well-being of children and families. We believe the Family First Prevention Services Act will enable the child welfare system to better serve our most vulnerable children and families.

Sincerely,

AMY HERBST,
Vice President, *Child Well-Being*,
Children's Hospital of Wisconsin.

FIRST FOCUS
CAMPAIGN FOR CHILDREN,
Washington, DC, June 14, 2016.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, *Committee on Ways and Means*,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. ORRIN HATCH,
Chairman, *Committee on Finance*,
U.S. Senate, Washington DC.

Hon. VERN BUCHANAN,
Chairman, *Human Resources Subcommittee*,
Committee on Ways and Means, House of
Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. SANDER LEVIN,
Ranking Member, *Committee on Ways and
Means*, House of Representatives, Wash-
ington, DC.

Hon. RON WYDEN,
Ranking Member, *Committee on Finance*, U.S.
Senate, Washington DC.

Hon. LLOYD DOGGETT,
Ranking Member, *Human Resources Sub-
committee*, Committee on Ways and Means,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY AND HATCH, RANK-
ING MEMBERS LEVIN AND WYDEN, CHAIRMAN
BUCHANAN AND RANKING MEMBER DOGGETT:
On behalf of the First Focus Campaign for
Children (FFCC), a bipartisan organization
committed to making children and their
families a priority in federal policy and
budget decisions, I am writing in strong sup-
port of H.R. 5456, the Family First Preven-
tion Services Act of 2016. This bill that
makes important policy changes in federal
child welfare spending that better support
the needs of vulnerable children and fami-
lies.

Currently, there are 415,000 children in the foster care system, a number that has increased by 3.5 percent from 2014. Nearly 31 percent of children placed in foster care were removed due to parental alcohol or drug use, and in some states, the percentage of removal due to parental substance abuse is closer to 60 percent. In addition, 57,000 children in foster care live in group homes or congregate care settings. These children and youth do not have a clinical need to be in such a setting, and should be with families who can provide love and support.

The Family First Prevention Services Act of 2016 contains many important provisions that address these poor statistics and will make a significant impact in strengthening and keeping families together. For the first time states will be able to use federal dollars from Title IV-E of the Social Security Act to provide time-limited, evidence-based services to families. The services are aimed to help prevent children from entering the foster care system by allowing federal reimbursement to families for mental health services, substance abuse treatment, and in-home parent skill-based programs. In addition, the bill incentivizes states to ensure that children are placed in family-based settings by only allowing federal reimbursement after an assessment has occurred and it has been determined that the child should be placed in a quality residential treatment program.

The legislation also includes a number of other provisions aimed to reform and

strengthen the child welfare system including the extension of the Title IV-B program, improving supports for youth transitioning to adulthood, establishing model foster care licensing standards, and calling for a GAO review to examine compliance of states in reinvesting savings from the federal adoption assistance reimbursement for special needs kids.

We look forward to working with you to ensure these new child welfare finance reforms will truly benefit children who come to the attention of the child welfare system and to continue to explore additional improvements on their behalf to ensure they all have safe, permanent families. Thank you for your continued leadership on behalf of these children.

Sincerely,

BRUCE LESLEY,
President.

CELEBRATING THE EDUCATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF MRS. SYLVIA CRIER

HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 28, 2016

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mrs. Sylvia Crier on receiving the annual New Orleans Excellence in Teaching Award from New Schools for New Orleans. The Excellence in Teaching Award is given to a teacher that goes above and beyond for their students and who has a powerful impact on their school community.

Mrs. Crier began her teaching career more than 51 years ago when New Orleans public schools were newly integrated. Prior to starting her teaching career, Mrs. Crier received her Bachelor's of Science in English from Tuskegee University and moved to New Orleans shortly after—and we're glad she did.

At the young age of 75, Mrs. Crier has taught English, U.S. History, civics and business to generations of New Orleans students. Currently, the students of McDonough 35 High are lucky enough to have a teacher who is invested in not only their educational achievement but also their professional and personal development.

Mr. Speaker, I join with the Crier family in celebrating Mrs. Crier's dedication to her students and receiving this achievement.

RECOGNIZING W. MARK DONALD, DMD, MAGD AS THE 52ND PRESI- DENT OF THE ACADEMY OF GEN- ERAL DENTISTRY

HON. GREGG HARPER

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 28, 2016

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the occasion of the 2016 Academy of General Dentistry's Annual meeting in Boston, Massachusetts to commend and congratulate W. Mark Donald, DMD, MAGD, for his service as the 52nd President of the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD) 2015–2016.

A Louisville, Mississippi native, Dr. Donald is a graduate of Mississippi State University and the University of Mississippi School of